

EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1.09.07
HB 38

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

I am Mary Ellen Schnur, chair of the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association Fish & Wildlife committee. I rise in support of House Bill 38, and offer an amendment.

At our organization's convention last week, we discussed with Fish Wildlife & Parks personnel the need for increased antlerless elk harvest in areas where populations are over objective. Liberal season types include either sex hunting, antlerless hunting with bulls on permit, and the opportunity to purchase a second tag (called A-9 for residents, B-12 for nonresidents) to harvest antlerless elk in some districts.

An impediment to more nonresidents taking antlerless elk is cost. A nonresident hunter pays \$668.00 for a general big game combination license, drawn on the lottery system. Outfitted nonresidents will pay \$1195.00 for a market-based big game combination license this year. Most hunters prefer to hunt a bull with such an expensive license. A nonresident hunter willing to take a second, antlerless, elk may apply in a drawing for the B-12 license, which costs another \$275.00. The general license holder then has almost \$943.00.00 in license fees; the market-based license holder has over \$1400.00.

The purpose of the B-12 license is not to generate extra income for the Department, but to be a tool for managing elk populations. Of the 17,000 nonresident elk license holders, many more would be willing to take antlerless elk with a B-12 license if it were a reasonable price.

We therefore suggest that "antlerless elk" be included in the title of HB 38, giving the Commission authority to offer the B-12 license at a reduced price also.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I will be happy to answer questions.

Mary Ellen Schnur